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A.NOLEN

Assaulting Mt. Helicon: Writing and Current Affairs.

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DIRTY JOBS

David Robarge, the CIA's chief 'historian'.

I don't envy academic gate-keepers: their job is to cover up really big lies, which is almost always impossible. In fact, in their attempt to mislead the public, they often hoist themselves on their own petard, which is exactly what CIA historian David Robarge did when he called Tom Mangold's *Cold Warrior*: "the most factually detailed, thoroughly researched study of Angleton."

Cold Warrior is factually detailed, the problem for Robarge is that most of the facts run against the CIA's official interpretation of Angleton's career. The **facts** given in *Cold Warrior* suggest that Angleton was, in fact, on to something when he spoke about a 'Monster Plot' of deep Soviet penetration into the CIA. Far from showing Angleton to be a completely incompetent boob, Mangold's book gives evidence of Angleton's counterintelligence insights, insights which ought to look pretty damn smart to the post-Snowden CIA:

> *When the computer age dawned over Langley, Anglton rejected the idea of computerizing his files. He was fearful that information technology would allow his staff's precious secrets to be distributed to terminals throughout the CIA building.*

I've spoken with someone who worked on installing Langley's current computer system, and like any competent IT expert, they know computers are designed to replicate information quickly and will therefore always be a liability for spies– no matter how many system admins are fired.

But Angleton's IT insights are not the crux of what I want to talk about today. Tom Mangold's book is, on the surface, a hatchet-job against Angleton's career and personality. The facts Mangold uses to back his claims do not support the conclusions he draws. As part of this deception, Mangold relies heavily on the testimony of three men who were tasked with bringing Angleton down and burning his files: William Colby, George Kalaris and Leonard McCoy.

Burning Angleton's files on Soviet penetration of the CIA and other American institutions was a really weird thing for the CIA to do. For an exploration of this topic, please see my post Jesus, Jimmy!, which explains why CIA leadership are still interested in shepherding the public's perception of Angleton.

But back to Colby, Kalaris and McCoy. Mangold's attitude towards these three men, and to post-Angleton CIA leadership, is fawning and largely uncritical. However the information Mangold gives us about the trio, when viewed dispassionately, suggests that Colby was probably a KGB asset and had a long standing feud with Angleton; it suggests McCoy had reason to hate Angleton for stymieing his career (McCoy was part of the CIA's distrusted Soviet Division); and it also suggests that Kalaris was ignorant of Washington politics and had a stagnant career in a South American backwater before the Angleton take-down. Colby's three big sources have their own reasons for distorting Angleton's legacy.

History, as Cleveland Cram well knows, is written by the victors.

I'll let Mangold's own words make my point that these three men are untrustworthy. As background, William Colby served in the OSS (which was ripe with Soviet plants) in Italy alongside Angleton. Colby became chief of the CIA's Far East Division, where he actively frustrated Angleton's counterintelligence efforts, ostensibly to protect his own turf.

Mangold on Colby's KGB ties:

> *During the Vietnam era, Angleton even went so far as to harbor doubts about Colby's loyalty, suspicions that were raised after Colby had become the subject of an Angleton-directed security investigation.*
>
> *While serving in Saigon, Colby had casually met a French medical doctor on three or four social occasions. According to the CIA's book of rules, a station chief like Colby should have reported all substantive meetings with potentially useful foreigners, but he appears not have done so in this case. He had been unaware at the time that the Frenchman was suspected of being a Soviet GRU agent. Later, the CIA picked up some of the doctor's incriminating radio transmissions from Vietnam. Years later, the doctor was caught in Paris by French security officials passing intelligence documents to his GRU case officer.*

Colby quashed the investigation of his meetings with the French GRU agent after he became Executive Director-Comptroller of the CIA. At best, Colby was incompetent and sloppy– *but you know what I think*– Colby was recruited by the GRU in Saigon. Colby later became Director of Central Intelligence (DCI).

Mangold describes McCoy as, "a young Soviet Division reports officer who later rose to become deputy chief of the Counterintelligence Staff after Angleton." From *bête noire* to deputy fox in the counterintelligence hen-house at Angleton's expense!

Finally, Mangold on George Kalaris' background: "George Kalaris could not have been more neutral to the Angleton controversies had he come from halfway up the Amazon– which, in effect he did." Mangold adds this tidbit about Kalaris' early career: "In the course of a notable career in the clandestine side of the house, he [Kalaris] became one of Colby's trusted Far East specialists." Kalaris may have been an ignorant castaway in Brazil, but was definitely not "neutral"!

It always amazes me how American 'experts' can switch regions of 'expertise' from one side of the globe to another at the drop of a hat. (This isn't just a CIA-proper phenomenon, but a think-tank and academic problem too. Hmmm.) Something went wrong for Colby's boy in the Far East: Kalaris was shunted off to Brazil before being called to Washington D.C. for Angleton's undoing. Kalaris orchestrated the burning of Angleton's files and oversaw the creation of Angleton's 'official history' at the CIA.

So these three men are Mangold's primary sources, a.nolen readers. It's impossible for Mangold to completely sweep their biases under the rug; he tries to deflect criticism of his analysis by mentioning these biases and finding excuses why they don't matter– a common trick that didn't work on this reader.

While the characters of Kalaris, McCoy and Colby are fascinating, I am particularly interested in what Mangold accuses Angleton of doing, because these accusations shed light on Colby, and his superiors', motives.

According to Mangold and his sources, Angleton was doing unprofessional work that didn't follow acceptable business practice. Specifically, Angleton was using data from the 1920s and 1930s to try to 'catch spies' in the 1960s. He came up with theories that didn't make sense to any of his superiors, THEREFORE the files which Angleton believed supported these theories had to be immediately burned, with a new, official history of Angleton's research created to replace them. The lack of Soviet agents who were caught is evidence of Angleton's incompetence. So says Mangold.

I don't believe that story and I can use Mangold's own evidence to counter it.

First of all, it wasn't Angleton's job to 'catch' spies. His job was to monitor them, as described by Mangold: "His [Angleton's] department was expected to collect information and to monitor clandestine operations aimed at disrupting and neutralizing the Soviet intelligence services."

'No spies being caught under Angleton's watch,' is only evidence of a lack of political will from his superiors, like James Schlesinger, to act on the information Angleton presented to them. It doesn't necessarily mean Angleton was giving bad information– and we'll never know if he was, because his files were burned by his replacement.

An anonymous source gives Mangold this description of how CIA leadership reacted when they found out about Angleton's 'Monster Plot' investigations: "My God, if we had only known this was going on, we could have stopped it years ago. We just didn't know; the seventh floor didn't pay close attention to what Angleton was doing."

This means, anolen.com readers, that CIA brass hired Angleton then pretty much ignored him, and everything he was doing, for twenty years. I believe 'The Seventh Floor' was so remiss because Angleton was hired to be a fig-leaf, someone to show Congress and to convince representatives that the sprawling CIA tumor was actually acting in the nation's interests. 'The Seventh Floor' chose Angleton because they believed he wasn't good enough to sniff out their conflicting loyalties. They didn't see Angleton as a threat; therefore he was ignorable. You can find my reasoning here.

As a corollary to the 'Floor Seven Didn't Know' story, Mangold belabors his point that Angleton's superiors, the men Angleton reported Soviet-spy-evidence to, 'just didn't understand any of Angleton's ramblings'. (Yet Angleton stayed on staff 20 years!)

For instance, Mangold quotes James Schlesinger:

> *"Listening to him was like looking at an Impressionist painting," Schlesinger explains. "Jim's mind was devious and allusive, and his conclusions were woven in a quite flimsy manner. His long briefings would wander on, and although he was attempting to convey a great deal, it was always*

> *smoke, hints, and bizarre allegations… if it had gone on much longer, and I had stayed, I would have seen there was nothing behind the curtain and I would have moved him."*

Uh, okay James, whatever you say. Colby's press source Seymour Hersh (a Michael Hastings predecessor?) tells it this way:

> *"After talking to Angleton, I then called Colby up to tell him that I thought his man was totally off the reservation– that, in essence, he was totally crazy."*

If that wasn't enough, lefty Mangold brings out the big guns: George H. Bush.

> *The following day, the future President of the United States telephoned George Kalaris to tell him about the meeting [with Angleton]. "Geroge, I listened very carefully to Jim Angleton yesterday, " Bush said frankly. "But I'm afraid I couldn't really understand what he was talking about. It all sounded very complicated."*

And of course, Mangold's readers are inundated by a barrage of "Crazy! Incompetent! Nonsense!" from Kalaris, Colby and McCoy.

Personally, I don't see what's so hard to understand about the 'Monster Plot': 'At least one CIA division, and dozens of public figures, have been infiltrated/recruited by the Soviets.' We now know from the Venona files that the OSS, the CIA's feeder-pool, was heavily infiltrated by Soviets. Since the 1970s, a lot of information has come out about celebrities and politicians who worked with Soviet agents; enough information to make authors like M. Stanton Evans question if McCarthy wasn't too tame in his red hunts.

But Angleton's insights were just too hard for Schlesinger, Bush, Colby, etc. to get their heads around. (Though they understood the Monster Plot well enough to know that Angleton's work had to be burned!)

In reality, 'The Seventh Floor' understood what Angleton was on to *so well* that no dissent was tolerated once Angleton had been removed:

> *"Virtually everyone volunteered damaging appraisals of Angleton's work. There was near unanimity that Colby had made the correct decision to fire him. Many officers said that Angleton's retirement was the best thing that could have happened to the agency's counterintelligence program.*

Finally– this is the most interesting bit– Mangold says Angleton was incompetent in his research methods:

> *According to former CIA general counsel Lawrence Houston, "Jim's [Angleton's] staff spent too much time reviewing old historical cases which had little relevance to current affairs. They would go over and over old cases like 'The Trust' and* Rote Kapelle*. They spent weeks and months on it. To me it seemed like a waste of time."*

And…

> *Critics of Angleton's methodology say that both he and Rocca wasted enormous quantities of time studying the gospels of prewar Soviet intelligence operations at the very moment that the KGB had shifted the style and emphasis of its operations against the West. Leonard McCoy points out that "The Trust" was largely irrelevant to the counterintelligence work of the 1960s because it had existed in a "totally different KGB and a totally different world." He explains: "This was a world in the 1920s and early 1930s in which there were one and a half million refuees from the Soviet Union, and it was easly enough for Soviet officials to penetrate and manipulate a large group like that. No such group existed by the 1950s…"*

Kim Philby, the rogue British spy who Angleton is criticized for not seeing through, had been recruited by the Soviets in the 1930s. He wasn't outed until the 1960s. Angleton's historical methods *were not* foolish, they were smart.

Here's the thing about the 1920s and 1930s: the political climate in the US was such that influential Soviet sympathizers could be open about their allegiance. Much publicly-available– and vetted– information on likely Soviet agents exists from this period. Investigations surrounding *Rote Kappelle* and 'The Trust' are two notable sources, HOWEVER, The Lusk Report and the Palmer Raids are two even more likely sources for Angleton to have used. (Mangold is careful not to mention these *highly probable* sources.)

The Lusk Report and the Palmer Raids were the result of the US Department of Justice's efforts to undermine foreign spies' political machinations through the labor movement. The Palmer Raids were dragnet raids on suspected Soviet front operations, and while some Americans' rights were violated, the raids broke up Trotsky's henchman Ludwig Martens' US spy networks. Being an outspoken American, I'm glad this happened *on balance*, because neither Trotsky, Lenin nor Stalin had any respect for anyone's rights and Palmer had strong reasons to suspect certain East Coast labor organizations of being Bolshevik fronts. (Not all labor organizations were raided.)

The fall out from the Palmer Raids is interesting, because many prominent people in the Woodrow Wilson administration spoke out on behalf of the socialist 'victims'. Famous names like Felix Frankfurter, Roscoe Pound, Ernst Freund joined forces with the newly-flegded ACLU to lambast Palmer, and even Harvard professor Zechariah Chafee jumped on the bandwagon. Assistant Secretary of Labor Louis Freeland Post canceled more than 2,000 of Palmer's warrants as being illegal. In effect, The Wilson Administration came down on the side of Martens, though Palmer had disrupted operations enough to prevent a Bolshevik Revolution happening on American soil– for the time being.

The Wilson Administration's actions are only surprising if you haven't read Anthony Sutton's *Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution*, in which Sutton documents the close working relationship between investment bankers, mining magnates and Lenin's regime. This collaboration was better known at the time than it is now.

Cartoon by Robert Minor in St. Louis Post-Dispatch (1911). Karl Marx surrounded by an appreciative audience of Wall Street financiers: John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, John D. Ryan of National City Bank, and Morgan partner George W. Perkins. Immediately behind Karl Marx is Teddy Roosevelt, leader of the Progressive Party.

The political backlash from Wilson's administration became so vicious that Attorney General Palmer's career was ruined; but his second-in-command, J. Edgar Hoover, had his career made. (Readers will remember that Hoover worked with Stephenson and FDR to set up what became the CIA. Hoover was an expert in manipulating Congress and undermining political opposition to the Executive Branch.)

Angleton would have gleaned a lot of useful information from reading about who opposed Palmer in Wilson's cabinet, then looking into which other careers were fostered by these 'broad-minded' men.

Regular readers will know that I'm not adverse to historical revisionism. Having read Mangold's book, this is what I think really went on with Angleton:

At some time during Angleton's twenty-year tenure, perhaps after the Philby incident, Angleton realized there was a strong pro-Soviet current running through the Anglophile circles he was used to. This current was culturally alien to him and it didn't sit well. The open secret of Soviet sympathies amongst some of the UK and the USA's most well-heeled and powerful citizens looked more sinister to Angleton than it originally had back in the 1920s. Angleton's buddies from Cambridge University had been recruited in the 1930s and were only just being outed as spies. Quietly, Angleton began to open files and pay more attention to dinner talk. He began to check the public record for powerful people who spoke out in support of known soviet agents like Ludwig Martens in the 1920s and 1930s, back when Philby was recruited.

Angleton's inquiries lead him to suspect people close to the White House and CIA leadership. Angleton uncovered Soviet spy networks that had been in place since the OSS, and a rash of informants at the CIA's Soviet Division. Angleton's discoveries were so pervasive that he started to distrust the entire CIA structure, and began to segregate his files from those of the rest of the organization. None of Angleton's activities raised red flags with CIA leadership because the leadership wasn't paying attention to their stooge in counterintelligence.

When Angleton began to talk to his superiors, testing the water with names of 30 world leaders suspected of working with the Soviets, his superiors showed no political will to pursue Angleton's claims. Men like James Schlesinger didn't respect Angleton enough to take what he was doing seriously, until *something* happened, and they realized Angleton had information that was deadly to them. Suddenly Angleton was 'crazy', his records had to be burned, and he would be sent as a sacrifice to the Church Committee. The CIA's history would need to be rewritten by Colby and Kalaris through the Cram Report, something career-minded CIA professionals accept as gospel.

Now, I'm not claiming that everything Angleton did was smart. I'm not saying that Angleton was completely right or that he didn't have emotional problems. I'm not saying Anatoliy Golitsyn wasn't a troublemaker. I'm not saying that there weren't *serious* cultural problems in Angleton's counterintelligence division.

In fact, in light of all the 'intelligence community' pundits who have screamed "KGB!" since the beginning of Snowden's revelations, I find this quote from Angleton about the Church Committee quite amusing:

> *The former Counterintelligence chief turned up at Langley sweaty, tired, and deeply distraught. As he calmed down, Angleton began to explain to Elder in quiet and measured tones that he had uncovered a "diabolical plot".*
>
> *"The Church Committee has opened up the CIA to a frontal*

> *assault by the KGB," he said. "This is the KGB's chance to go for the jugular. The whole plan is being masterminded by Kim Philby in Moscow. The KGB's only object in the world is to destroy me and the agency. The committee is serving as the unwitting instrument of the KGB."*

Clearly, Angleton was capable of the same tunnel-vision as his sucessors are today.

However, if you have access to enough information, perhaps you don't have to be very smart or balanced to realize that something is wrong at the CIA. I ask readers not to look to Angleton's character for proof of vast Soviet infiltration, but to look to the reactions of Angleton's enemies at the CIA. Forty years later and the CIA is *still* protecting traitors who feared Angleton.

Tom Mangold's book, the CIA's favorite Angleton book, does more to uncover the 'Monster Plot' than Angleton could ever have hoped to do in his lifetime. I encourage the public, and CIA employees, to read *Cold Warrior* and ask themselves if this is an organization they want to have access to their health records, financial records and personal communications.

P.S. Why Tom Mangold? Tom is a product of the BBC, an organization that was set up by the same people who set up the British Security Coordinate (BSC)– the BBC and BSC were both set up by Bill Stephenson and his supporters. The BSC worked with the OSS, which became the CIA. So you could say that the BBC and the CIA were birthed from the same mother.

P.P.S. If you'd like to learn more about why J. Edgar Hoover was the darling of America's anti-democratic elite, and how he undermined 'undesirable' — not illegal– grass-roots political movements on the left and right, read *The Bureau: My Thirty Years in Hoover's FBI*, by William C Sullivan. This book explains why it's toxic to have PRISM-like dragnet surveillance systems in a democracy: the controllers of such a system will use it to persecute their opposition, not the nation's enemies.

3 COMMENTS

WHAT HAPPENED TO NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC?

I remember being six years old and crawling through my great-grandparents' cramped attic. They had three shelves filled with yellow and white *National Geographic* magazines dating back to the 1960s. My mother said great-grandpa was saving them because they might be worth something someday, but I think the real reason was that the magazines were so beautiful, and so educational, that it just felt wrong to throw them out. That's what *National Geographic* used to be: classy, informative, artistic– a quality publication, albeit lefty in the most well-heeled way possible.

Once upon a time, readers. The magazine is still pretty, but now the writing is superficial and invariably politically correct. The real travesty, however, is something called 'Nat Geo', the National Geographic Society's television channel.

Nat Geo's program *When Aliens Attack* just popped up on my Netflix menu. I'm focusing on this program today because it is sensationalist pseudo-science that encompasses several suspicious trends in American 'educational' programming.These trends are 1) recruiting for the US military 2) talking up US military dominance 3) reinforcing the idea that the US federal government is the only legitimate American government 4) planting the idea that citizens can't trust each other, they can only count on the government in an emergency and 5) promoting the UN as the only organization which can legitimately speak for the world (with US approval).

You can watch *When Aliens Attack* for free using the link above. For those of you who don't have 90 minutes to waste, I'm going to briefly describe the documentary. The overarching premise:

> *"This is not science fiction, it's science. And experts from Stephen Hawking, to NASA, to the Pentagon say they [aliens] may not come in peace."* — When Aliens Attack *narrator.*

> *"Some say that Alien invasion is considered a real threat by everyone form the US, to the UN to the UK."* — When Aliens Attack *narrator.*

Everybody who matters, according to *When Aliens Attack*, believes the possibility of an alien invasion is worth your time and Nat Geo has a battery of 'experts' to convince you too, including:

– Seth Shostak, of the SETI Institute.

– Nick Pope, Former Executive Officer with UK Ministry of Defense: "With 21 years at the Ministry of Defense, I've clearly gained an insight into how we would fight an alien invasion."

– LTC Brian De Toy, Director of Defense Studies at West Point.

– Stephen Hawking, the theoretical physicist from Cambridge University.

– Paul Springer, Strategy expert from the US Air Force's Air Command and Staff College, who tells us this: "In the case of a global invader, depending on the situation, the United States has a multitude of plans. We have war-gamed out every scenario imaginable."

Of course, details are classified. But have no fear, because the narrator tells us: "There is one government scientist who has developed his own plans for an alien invasion."

Dr. Travis Taylor has written his own paper on what we should do when aliens attack, *Motive Based Classifications of Extra Terrestrials*. He's also co-authored a book, *Alien Invasion: How to Defend Earth*, available on Amazon.com. Here's his photo.

Your call: military strategist or tango dancer?

Dr. Taylor describes his research:

> *"I was working on a project for the Intelligence Community [There* they *are again!- anolen.com] on how to fight an asymmetric war. And we got thinking about is it likely that we ever would be invaded by aliens? And we decided that it's very likely. And that we needed a plan."*

Here is where things get scary. Dr. Travis Taylor is a physicist and Defense Department Engineer. He's also a Senior Army Research Scientist, who has worked on cutting edge weapons and developed 'Next-Generation' armor systems for troops in Iraq. Dr. Taylor has top secret and above clearance at the US Army Missile Command.

When he's not playing with weapons or being a trusted military insider, Taylor's self-promoting via alien invasions. Yeah. The co-author of Dr. Taylor's book is Bob Boan, a defense intelligence consultant and aerospace analyst. Somehow, Taylor and Boan got the inside track at Nat Geo to promote their hobby.

So according to Nat Geo, a military scientist and a defense consultant, what happens when the aliens first make contact? They want to talk to the UN, of course!

> *"The closest thing we have to an Alien Ambassador is the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs."*

Former US diplomat and space policy adviser Michael Michaud, who "helped create the UN plan for alien contact", explains:

> *"The International Academy of Astronautics developed a draft protocol for communicating with a species that might be detected. And these documents were presented to the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the year 2000."*

This draft protocol is titled *Declaration of Principles Concerning Activities Following the Detection of Extraterrestrial Intelligence*. In the documentary, this protocol document is shown to have nine points, the eighth of which reads:

> *8.* Response to signals*: In the case of the confirmed detection of a signal, signatories to this declaration will not respond without first seeking guidance and consent of a broadly representative international body such as the United Nations.*

(SETI provides a copy of these points, with the 'United Nations' language moved around a bit.)

The people allowed to talk to the aliens first will be the "leaders of the world's most prominent nations," like Barack Obama, and their message will be broadcast in "the most widely spoken languages in the world: English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic and Hindi".

However, says the documentary, our enemies [pan to a Pakistani-looking man in traditional garb] will frustrate efforts, and well-meaning ham radio enthusiasts may garble the legitimate US government message with their own broadcasts.

Of course, the aliens are predatory and technologically advanced. "There is no necessary connection between science being advanced and moral or ethical behavior", says Michael Michaud, while pointing to Hitler's Germany and the Nazis. A montage of US military prowess follows, plugging everything from "rail guns" to US Cyber Command. (That's sooo 2011!)

According to Dr. Taylor, the Pentagon– the "world leader on

asymmetric warfare"– will use guerrilla techniques that they learned from the Mujahideen and enemy fighters in Iraq to fight the aliens. (So I guess all that money wasn't wasted!)

What do the aliens want? The best that Nat Geo and Dr. Taylor can come up with is that the aliens are actually machines who want to steal our proteins and chlorophyll– you know, that green stuff in plants. *My cold, dead hands!*

What happens after the first alien offensive? Civilization collapses and people turn on each other like in *The Road*. *But all hope is not lost!* Humanity eventually rallies around American values to fight the intruders, and in the long-standing tradition of American television, a rainbow coalition of apocalypse survivors bands together, rallying around the words of Barack Hussein, the only legitimate overlord.

As diverse as the survivors will undoubtedly be, according to *When Aliens Attack,* these are the guys who sacrifice themselves as living biological weapons to save what's left of the White House.

The "biological suicide bombers" and "living germ warfare units".

And these are the "suicide warriors" who take one for ~~the United States Government~~ humanity.

"Suicide Warriors"

Of course, ~~Washington~~ we win in the end, thanks to the "suicide warriors" and lots of latex balloons.

So there you have it, *When Aliens Attack*.

What happened to the National Geographic Society? I don't want to give the impression that I think strategic planning is foolish, or even that other life in space is impossible, but this 'documentary' is a fairy-story laced with politics, not a thoughtful look at war-gaming or scientific analysis. This show is pseudo-science, propaganda and a cheap recruiting drive. What happened to the respectable society that produced great-grandpa's magazines?

Nat Geo, the National Geographic Society's namesake television channel, is headquartered in Washington D.C. and is majority owned by 21st Century Fox, a Murdoch company. Rupert Murdoch, an Australian-American business magnate, is a typical globalist operator. The producers of the documentary are Louis C. Tarantino and Douglas J. Cohen, who create a lot of low-quality militaristic and Bible-minded programming through their production company Flight 33 . Given that fundamentalist Christians are well represented in the US military and that the US military is the enforcement arm of globalist business interests, it's not hard to see cynical propaganda motives in Mr. Cohen and Mr. Tarantino's choice of projects.

But dirty private money isn't the only poison. Readers may recall the ugly news story last year about the NSA claiming not to be able to search their own emails. Justin Elliott elucidates:

> *I [Justin Elliott] filed a request last week for emails between NSA employees and employees of the National Geographic Channel over a specific time period. The TV station had aired a friendly documentary on the NSA and I want to better understand the agency's public-relations efforts.*
>
> *A few days after filing the request, Blacker called, asking me to narrow my request since the FOIA office can search emails only "person by person," rather than in bulk. The NSA has more than 30,000 employees.*
>
> *I reached out to the NSA press office seeking more information but got no response.*

Is The National Geographic Channel in a propaganda partnership with the US Intelligence Community? Given that Nat Geo regularly airs programs like *Inside Shock and Awe, Camp Leatherneck, Iraq's Guns for Hire, 21 Days to Baghdad, Inside the U.S. Secret Service* and *Inside American Power: The Pentagon*… I'd say Nat Geo collaboration with the US Intelligence Community is quite likely. I don't believe it's far-fetched to speculate that spooks see propaganda value in speaking through a venerable, 'sciency', American institution like the National Geographic Society.

I don't think that Nat Geo is alone in its collaboration. Nat Geo's main programming competitors, Discovery Channel and History Channel,

carry much the same pseudo-science programming. They even carry the same militaristic, religious and political bents. Consider these comparisons:

The Discovery Channel, controlled by the Newhouse publishing family, is based out of Silver Springs Maryland (a Washington D.C. suburb.) Discovery has a sister-channel that runs programs glorifying the military: American Heroes Channel. Discovery is good for 'ghost shows' in particular, as well as programs on obscure religious themes like Jesus' lost tomb. Discovery recently got in trouble for airing a show titled *Megalodon: the Monster Shark Lives* which made the sensationalist, and incorrect, assertion that this prehistoric creature was still alive. While *Megalodon* stands out for its dishonesty, much Discovery programming follows the same lines.

The History Channel, joint owned by the Hearst Corporation and Disney, is based out of New York City (of which D.C. is a suburb). History has a sister-channel that runs programs glorifying the military: Military History. History is also known for its paranormal and Biblical programming. History has been criticized for airing *many* sensationalist, pseudo-scientific, lurid programs.

It's funny that this troika of television content providers should all follow a similar strategy, but catch this: In 2008, 'The History Channel' changed its name to 'History', just like 'The Discovery Channel' changed its name to 'Discovery' a decade earlier. It's almost as if Murdoch, Hearst and Disney are gradually realizing what J.D. Rockefeller knew all along: competition is a sin.

I'll finish this post with an observation: these sensationalist, military-minded programs may appeal to a segment of the public who are not very critical. These shows certainly put off thinking people and reinforce the idea that the military is full of idiots. Seeing as warfare is increasingly high tech, and intelligent recruits are therefore a necessity, it may be stupid for institutions like West Point and the US Army to give their 'experts' free rein with the media.

Not that US television is the only place where Army brass' judgement fails. Remember how Army leadership allowed a British documentary crew to film Bowe Bergdahl's screw-up unit? Or those foolish, loud-mouth Army officers who complained about Obama to Michael Hastings and ruined Stanley McChrystal's career? It's almost like Army leadership wants bad PR…

P.S. I've ripped on another American standard-bearer, The Smithsonian Institution, in my post on their program dealing with The Amityville Horror, a cheap documentary which I believe carries a political agenda: to encourage 'feelings of powerlessness' in uncritical viewers. If I had to name one organization with the same standing as The National Geographic Society, it would be the Smithsonian. Seems as though they've both been prostituted, which is a tragedy for the nation.

LEAVE A COMMENT

THE THINKING DISEASE

When I was 23, I found a job that really 'sucked me in' and changed the way I viewed the world. I did research for a financial firm, which is a misleading way of describing it– 'financial intelligence' is closer to the mark. My boss would have me dissect industries: look at how they were set up, by whom and with whose money.

The techniques which I used are similar to those that the FBI uses to 'map' organized crime networks. I would map out capital flows between the 15 largest firms in an industry, or which companies share directors. After a few years of this work, it became clear that there's not much competition in strategically important sectors of the economy.

In fact, strategically important sectors of the economy are driven by political considerations, not economic or 'efficiency' concerns. A consequence of this is that information which is painful to deal with is usually ignored until it's just too painful to keep ignoring it. An example of a painful reality is Peak Oil, the inescapable fact that higher demand and plateauing supply *without viable alternatives* equals ugly, ugly, ugly.

While I was engrossed in my work and loved it, there was a price to pay. It became difficult to relate to the other newly-grads, who didn't understand that market forces rarely guide the market or that their 80-hr/week job at Sachs was really just government subsidized larceny. The circle of people I could relate to became smaller and smaller– and older and older– until the median age of my 'real' friends hit 50. (I kept a circle of twenty-somethings that I'd could 'girls night out' with, but such outings were always an exercise in hiding the fact I was, basically, an NYC-based prepper.)

Another drawback from finding out as much as I did as early as I did, was that I didn't really have the emotional equipment to deal with it. Things looked pretty damn dire and there was no likely hope in sight. When my good job finally ended, I didn't have many options to improve my quality of life: I had graduated with enough debt to keep me needing a $50k+ until I was at least 40, and that's if I wanted to live with my parents the whole time. I didn't have the option– or I didn't see how I had the option– to get off this frightening, *Sex-in-the-City* inspired carnival ride and do something which I could *live with*, let alone feel good about. There were times that I wished a bus would just hit me.

And that, readers, is what I call 'The Thinking Disease". "The Thinking Disease" is not a disease– it's perfectly healthy response– but it is a painful condition. It's the stress of understanding there's a problem without knowing how to tackle the problem or even having your concerns validated by other people (largely because they don't want to think about something that's hard to deal with).

You may not be worried about where the US government is going or plateauing oil resources, but almost anybody who is knowledgeable about something will at some time despair over crazy, short-term policies or preventable problems.

I'm not a genius, there's a lot I don't know. But at 23, I knew *enough* to understand that political and economic life as we know it– India to Indiana– is not sustainable and the people we trust to lead us, academia, 'experts', the government, etc. are, usually, completely *un*trustworthy. The first few years after finding out that the world view I'd been brought up on was designed to keep me from protecting my own interests– those first few years were a nightmare of freeze/flight/fight. *What do you do?* Nobody had the answer, not even my 50 year old friends.

So, in a public-minded spirit, I'm going to share this PeakMoment video, because while my views are unorthodox, they are by no means unusual and there may be other people who are struggling with the question: *What do I do?*

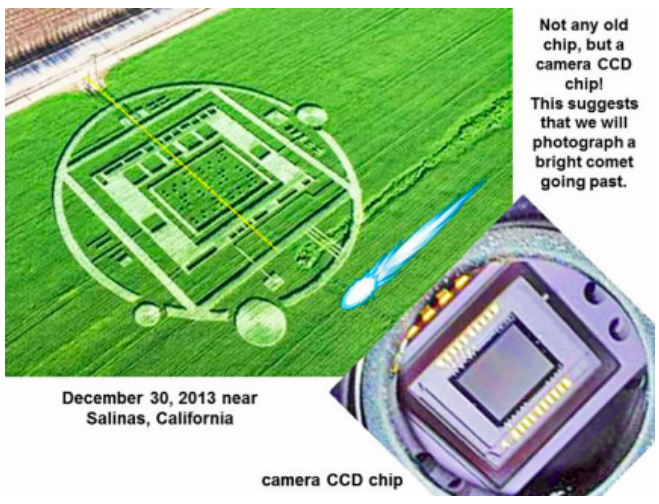
Disclaimer: I am leery of psychology as a science; as a rule I like data sets not data points. I don't endorse all the people/ideas Dr. Kathy McMahon brings up. I think this video is useful if readers take Dr. McMahon's observations as those of a well-meaning acquaintance. She makes many observations that resonate with me and I feel these may resonate with other people who've contracted "The Thinking Disease".

Error loading player:
No playable sources found

To end this all on a happy note, I'm much older now. While my opinion on many things hasn't got any rosier, I know now that there are ways to live well even in the midst of decrepitude– you've got to use creativity and prioritization to find them. In fact, sometimes pervasive rot makes it easier to identify those things which make the work of living worthwhile. It's also worth remembering that *this too shall pass*.

2 COMMENTS

CROP CIRCLES


Not any old chip, but a camera CCD chip! This suggests that we will photograph a bright comet going past.
December 30, 2013 near Salinas, California
camera CCD chip

I smell 'willful destruction of property' AND 'theft of trade secrets'! [*Thank you legal.*] Who has jurisdiction in space?

I was watching a rerun of a favorite 1990s British television program, *Midsomer Murders*, when I was reminded of something that I hadn't thought of in a long time: crop circles.

The episode which triggered my memory, *Electric Vendetta*, is all about crop circles. For me, this episode is unique because I find the plot more far-fetched and less engrossing than usual for the series. There are goofy special effects too: blue-sparks representing 'electrocution' not unlike those from the movie *Highlander*. Altogether, *Electric Vendetta* seems rushed and poorly written– and I'm not the only one to think so. According to Wikipedia:

> *"The episode is notable for the fact that one of the deaths is not adequately explained in the denouement due to a mistake in the editing process."*

Electric Vendetta is the first of two episodes written by Terry Hodgkinson, a new writer hired after the series' first flush of success who was only intermittently engaged by the producers. Hodgkinson writes a lot about WWII and MI6.

I'm telling you this, because the tackiness of this episode reminded me of the tacky 'crop circle' phenomenon, which was centered around the southern U.K., where I lived for a time during the 1990s.

I remember that time vividly: pop culture was *saturated* in UFOs, aliens, *The X Files* and crop circles. Believing in aliens was 'fringe' like being a hippie was 'fringe'– an acceptable way of being eccentric. A lot of people wanted to believe.

I do *not* believe that aliens, cosmic rays or psychic energy creates these circles. They're made by people; that's obvious. I think it is

irresponsible to suggest otherwise.

Therefore, it's very interesting to me that so many media outlets in the 1990s were at least willing to entertain the idea that crop circles might be supernatural, or extra-terrestrial, in origin. The alien mania reached such a fever pitch at that time, that any attention to the 'phenomenon' of crop circles– by 'skeptics' or otherwise– just fanned the flames higher.

Take, for instance the 'International Crop Circle Making Competition' sponsored by *The Guardian* of Snowden fame*;* the German magazine *PM;* the leading crop circle journal in Britain, *The Cerealogist;* as well as a foundation set up by CIA agent Arthur Koestler and *The Observer* editor David Astor, The Koestler Foundation. This competition is mentioned in most 'crop circle' histories as being authoritative proof that man could have made *some* of the circles.

In a fantastic twist of logic, competition organizer Rupert Sheldrake describes the results in this way:

> *After the competition I took part in many interviews, in which I pointed out that although the results showed that it was possible to hoax crop circles, it did not prove that all were hoaxes. The fact that it is possible to forge a £50 note does not prove that all £50 notes are forgeries.*

Sheldrake, show me the last £50 note aliens gave you.

The mind games don't stop there– Sheldrake suggests crop circle skeptics are 'conspiracy theorists', if their arguments are taken to a logical conclusion:

> *Thinking through the hoax hypothesis to its logical conclusion led into the treacherous territory of conspiracy theories. Who were all the hoaxers apart from Doug and Dave? Were they in the military or intelligence services?*

Isn't that a marvelous bit of horse-talk? What Mr. Sheldrake is doing here is tarring skeptics with the slur 'conspiracy theorist' while deflecting from a very real concern, that military or intelligence services were/are involved in a psychological operation aimed at the British public. It is important that Sheldrake chose to discredit this concern because there *are* links between the crop circle phenomenon and the intelligence services.

First of all, the county where crop circles were first reported is Wiltshire, home to the UK Ministry of Defense's 'Defence Evaluation and Research Agency' (DERA), a large military research facility which included a Protection and Life Sciences Division (PLSD). I was unable to find a description of what the UK PLSD did, however the US Army Research Laboratory runs something called a Life Sciences Research Office, which contains a 'Social and Behavior Science' program tasked with the following:

> *The development of a systematic and efficient approach to collect and analyze data to describe fundamental social processes and detect changes in institutional structures combined with theories of cause and outcomes in the behavioral realm will provide military decision makers with the capability to anticipate and mitigate behaviors that impact U.S. interests and national security.*

As well as…

> *The program encourages the collection of primary data for the development and testing of theoretical models and for the development and advancement of methodologies for data collection, statistical methods, and research designs that have the potential to help advance scientific understanding of human behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, research on physiological and/or behavioral responses to social situations at multiple levels of analysis including:* ***population level adaptation and response to natural and human induced perturbations*** *including, but not limited to, climate change, mass migration, war, and attempts at democratization; the role of culture, cognition, institutions and other intermediary level factors in accounting for variations in human behavior; the impact of social context on individual human decision-making under risk and uncertainty; and the search for organizing principles to describe emergent and latent properties of dynamic social systems and networks.*

The emphasis is my own. Could a UK Life Sciences program have been measuring the population level effects of crop circle induced perturbations? Could they have been looking at how institutions like *The Guardian* or the Koestler Foundation affect public debate? Were they interested in seeing where copycat crop circle makers first appeared, and how long the phenomenon took to spread outside of the United Kingdom?

Whatever the Life Sciences program was doing, it's *probably* now being done by a private company called QinetiQ, which was created when 75% of DERA was privatized in 2001. (Privatization is the best way to take programs out of public scrutiny!)

> *QinetiQ became a public private partnership in 2002 with the purchase of a stake by US-based private equity company the Carlyle Group. — QinetiQ.com*

Nobody should be surprised that people like Rupert Sheldrake want to draw attention away from the intelligence services, seeing as he works closely with the Koestler Foundation, which was started by a guy who made his mark as a CIA asset by manipulating public opinion in favor of the 'Non-Communist Left'. (Read all about that in Frances Stonor Saunder's *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters*). Koestler was also interested in things like ESP, mass propaganda and using drugs *à la* Timothy Leary– all things which fall squarely in line with research objectives of the CIA's MKUltra project. So, nothing

The aliens want you to expand your mind with a pipe… like Aldous Huxley.

'intelligence services' about the Koestler Foundation! And as far co-founder David Astor goes… intelligence has been an Astor family tradition on both sides of the Atlantic, David to Tony.

But for crop circles to have anything to do with the military or intelligence is a conspiracy theory…

Another intelligence link to crop circles comes from the man who is credited with first calling them 'crop circles' in the early 1980s: Colin Andrews.

Colin received a grant from Laurance Rockefeller, of the famous American Rockefeller family, to study the crop-circle 'phenomenon'. The Rockefeller family, particularly Nelson Rockefeller, was instrumental helping British-aligned spy William Stephenson set up what would became the CIA.

So what were Andrews' findings? It's hard to tell from Colin Andrews' website, but The Museum of Unnatural History characterizes them this way:

> *Another circle researcher, Colin Andrews, working on a grant from Laurance Rockefeller, came to the conclusion that 80% of circles made in the years 1999 and 2000 were manmade and either prompted by business and/or media interests.*

So much like David Astor's and Arthur Koestler's foundation's findings, Rockefeller's findings are that *some* of the circles are man-made, thus preserving the ridiculous claim that some *aren't* man-made. Astonishing.

Of course, the question we should all be asking is: c*ui bono* from the crop circles? Is there any value in leading gullible members of the public down this man-made path?

Just keep watching the circle.

The crop circles, as we know them, started in the late 1970s, increased in the 1980s and by 1991 researchers like Sheldrake were counting 800 a year with some being very complex. So the 'phenomenon' is a modern one, with no historical precedent. We know that the program started in the late 1970s, a few years after psy-ops like the CIA's MKUltra programs were outed. Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* debuted in 1977, as did George Lucas' *Star Wars* , so aliens were in the public consciousness. Was the time ripe for a social experiment?

A running theme with the crop circle 'phenomenon', as with the alien 'phenomenon', is that 'the government denies their existence'. We're all supposed to get some kind of 'closure' from the government 'fessing up and admitting that Roswell happened and that 20% of the circles are 'real'.

Is this crop circle thing just an experiment to see how best to sell propaganda to the public? To investigate how even a *ridiculous* claim can be gradually sold or worked into the collective consciousness? Does the crop circle phenomenon have the added benefit of increasing government prestige, because if the government 'admits' something, then we all know for sure that it's true?

Thought experiment: If Washington D.C. 'admitted' tomorrow that it had found the Loch Ness Monster in 1948, would that mean the Loch Ness Monster really existed? Like WMD?

Think carefully before you answer.

Whistle-blowers died to bring you this photo.

LEAVE A COMMENT

JED SUNDEN AND THE RUSSIANS

Jed Sunden, founder of The Kyiv Post. Needs work.

A reader recently drew my attention to the publishing career of an exceptional American, Jed Sunden, and his partner Mohammad Zahoor. The following post is a history of Jed, Mohammad and their role in Ukrainian politics after the fall of the USSR. Understanding this pair is important for anyone interested in the Maidan coup because their story provides background to the American intervention in Ukraine.

Jed Sunden started a newspaper in Kiev– *The Kyiv Post*— straight out of college. Well, almost straight out of college. Jed came to Kiev in 1993 to do a "research project" just when the corrupt privatization of state assets was at its height. He "heard" that the new Ukrainian airline needed an inflight magazine– so BANG! — Sunden suddenly became the magazine's producer. After one year with the magazine, Sunden took a couple thousand US dollars and created Kiev's leading English newspaper.

Jed Sunden's career is an example of US 'soft power' intervention in Ukraine at a time when American elites saw exceptional opportunity for themselves. Sunden is not a self-made genius; he was the face of an investment– a newspaper– that was used to shape public opinion after the fall of the Soviet Union. (*The Kyiv Post* is still used for the same purposes.)

What views did Jed Sunden represent? According to a self-congratulatory interview in his own paper, "He [Sunden] also takes a critical view of Kremlin political leaders and the threats they pose for Ukraine's newfound independence."

Sunden's "critical views" are developed in a later *Kiev Post* article, titled "Richest Expats: Jed Sunden", where the American is described as "a libertarian who believes in low taxes, minimal government and free speech." It gets better:

> *He [Sunden] also has waged an unending campaign against Ukraine's lingering vestiges of communism – including seeking the removal of all monuments to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin. He has not succeeded yet, but he hasn't given up.*

Sunden's paper's 'edgy' reporting earned him mild disapproval from Ukraine's Kuchma government in 2000; but high-level American diplomatic intervention cleared that up for him.

What is Jed Sunden's background? Yet another wunderkind genius from Manhattan like Buzzfeed's Jonah Peretti. Jed graduated from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota– his only achievement prior to becoming a Ukrainian media magnate. It's not uncommon for rich kids from Manhattan to go to college in the Midwest; I once asked a NYCer why so many make this choice and they did me the honor of an honest reply: "Because you people are easy to take advantage of." People like Sunden make me believe that observation carries some truth– he's clearly a master of the hustle.

Sunden's political maneuverings are as tacky as his backstory: he funded FEMEN, the nudist-Feminist movement which aims to offend Christians and Muslims everywhere. In fact, Jed earned the moniker

"Femen Post" for his no-holds-barred sponsorship of the operation. In 2011, political pressure from *somewhere* forced Sunden to distance himself from the bra-less type of *provokatsiya.*

Ukrainian Alumna Organizes Kyiv Protest Against Sex Tourism

Open World alumna and NGO activist Anna Hutsol took the lead in organizing a July 30 protest in central Kyiv against Ukraine's growing sex tourism industry. Members and supporters of Hutsol's women's organization, FEMEN, staged a "street theater" event and held up placards saying "Ukraine is Not a Bordello" in different languages. The goal of the protesters, mainly female university students, was to encourage the Ukrainian government to take legislative action against sex tourism. The rally was covered by Reuters.com, the English-language *Kyiv Post*, and many other media outlets. Hutsol had visited Bethlehem, Pa., in 2007 on a women as leaders exchange hosted by Northampton Community College. Trip highlights included meeting with representatives of the League of Women Voters and of the Women's Leadership Initiative of the area United Way. Hutsol says, "This is the main lesson I have learned in the U.S., while watching the work of American NGOs—never to wait till the problem resolves itself or the government starts solving it; sometimes our government does not even know about existing problems. You should yourself initiate the change and work in the direction that in the end will result in a big change in your country." National grantee: Academy for Educational Development

Open World alumna Anna Hutsol.

A protest against sex tourism that's actually great advertizing for sex tourism.

Perhaps Sunden's political forays distracted him from the paper, because in the years prior to *The Kyiv Post's* sale, reporting quality suffered. Jed lost a lot of money in the 2008 economic crisis which precipitated the sale of *The Kyiv Post* to Mohammad Zahoor in 2009.

According to Sunden's Linked In profile, he hasn't done anything since 2012, when he set up an Ukrainian internet content company called 'Internet Investments', where he "Recruited and oversaw management team," then quickly sold the firm to an Ukrainian investor. Post-2012 information on Sunden is hard to find.

Why is Jed Sunden rolling back his web presence? He's probably retooling to make a comeback from the hit he took in 2008. Perhaps we'll see Sunden in Kiev when the shooting stops. But enough about Jed, let's talk about Zahoor.

Who is the man who Jed Sunden offloaded his faltering soft-power investment onto? Who is now holding fort for *The Kyiv Post* ?

According to GQ, Zahoor got his start in the 1970s, when Pakistan was working with the Soviet Union to build a steel mill. (Economic aid like this was a typical Soviet soft-power strategy in developing countries.) Zahoor was singled out for a special scholarship: his father was 'Auditor General' of Pakistan– that means papa was Karachi's corruption watchdog. Zahoor left Karachi to study metallurgy in Donetsk, Ukraine in 1974. After graduation he had a five-year commitment to work at Pakistan Steel, where he was a "rising star", according to this US Ukrainian Business Council (USUBC) article. Zahoor married his first Russian woman during this period.

In the 1980s, the USSR's relationship with Pakistan went sour: the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and Pakistan decided to support the US and condemn the invasion. (Remember that during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, it was more profitable for Moscow to sell arms to the CIA-trained Taliban than to supply their own troops.) Pakistan took their ball, and their Soviet-backed steel mill, onto America's court.

According the the USUBC, Zahoor's career at Pakistan Steel was stymied because he'd married a Russian. Zahoor left the steel works for a Pakistani textiles wholesaler, which soon used Zahoor's Moscow connections, and a Thai business partner, to get into steel trading. Zahoor and his Thai partner ran Metalsrussia, a Hong Kong-registered trading company based in Moscow that became the main trader for Russia's Cherepovets metallurgy factory. Metalsrussia was renamed ISTIL Group in 1991.

It seems that sometime at the end of the 1980s, Zahoor's patronage switched from being Russian to American. Perhaps this is because the CIA was pumping so much money into Pakistan's neighbor Afghanistan, which wanted to buy steel-based products to fight Russians?

In 1993 Thailand imposed an anti-dumping duty on Russian rolled metal which knocked the bottom out of ISTIL Group's primary business, causing Zahoor to turn his gaze to Ukrainian steel producers.

In the early 1990s, when the USSR fell and state assets were privatized, Zahoor got in on the action and bought a steel factory in Donetsk which owed him $19 million. The 'privatization' process in the Ukraine was no less corrupt than the USAID-approved fiasco in Russia, which gutted the country and created the class of plutocrats/oligarchs who Western intellectuals love to mock today. Zahoor, Wunderkind Jed Sunden's political buddy, is one of those oligarchs. After scraping together a fortune, Zahoor finagled his British citizenship.

In 1994 Zahoor got into Ukrainian politics, investing in incumbent president Leonid Kravchuk, who presided over the rape of Ukrainian state assets by oligarchs. Zahoor's backing of Kravchuk made a political enemy of the next president, Leonid Kuchma, who would later add Jed Sunden to his sh*t-list too. In fact, Sunden and Zahoor share more than political enemies: when Sunden needed money in 2006, Zahoor's company, Dragon Capital, helped Sunden sell off 20% of the newspaper's stock.

Zahoor bought four more steel mills, as well as other assets using European Bank for Reconstruction and Development money (that 'bank' is primarily funded by the US government). Zahoor **suggests** that he's now a billionaire, but he won't disclose sums. With remarkable prescience, Zahoor liquidated his steel assets in 2008 at the top of the market. (He says China's overproduction for the Beijing Olympics tipped him off… and I thought all those tourist attractions were plaster!)

Whatever *really* lead Zahoor to sell out in 2008 was solid information, because Donetsk, the heartland of Zahoor's fortune, is now a center of bloody fighting after the CIA-sponsored Maidan coup earlier this year. Donetsk is a largely pro-Russian city in Eastern Ukrainian where US-sponsored Maidan forces are bombing civilians.

Since the sale of his steel factories, things haven't been universally easy for Zahoor. Zahoor is a Muslim and his buying Kiev-based assets put the Jewish community there in an uproar, prompting Zahoor to write this op-ed calling for peace. Perhaps the real irony here is that Zahoor only looks like he's not a friend of Israel. Fortunately, this spat seems to have settled itself.

I believe, anolen.com readers, that Zahoor's greatest talent, and consequently his greatest use for the Americans, is in being a flashy, media distraction. Zahoor, whatever his Kiev troubles, has not publicly acted like a 'representative of Islam' in Ukraine. The only thing Zahoor seems to do now is make noise with his new pop-star wife.

According to *Der Spiegel*, Zahoor met his current wife, Kamaliya, in 2003. (I assume he ditched the first Russian wife prior to this?!) Kamaliya was Miss World in 2008 and is a popular songstress in Ukraine. Now that he's sold all of his mills, Zahoor's new ambition is to make Kamaliya into the next Lady Gaga. *Mohammad, will your achievements never end?!*

Danny Wallace delivers for Mr. and Mrs. Zahoor.

Perhaps the only thing sadder than Zahoor pimping out his wife is reading Danny Wallace's satirical piece on the pair for GQ, in which the author struggles with his own position as part of the Great Circle of Media Whoredom, while playing into Zahoor's PR assault on the public.

When not buying complimentary interviews from glossy magazines, Mr. and Mrs. Zahoor spend their time starring in their own reality TV show, *Meet the Russians*, which has as much right to be called 'Meet the Pakistanis', and ought to be called 'Meet the Globalists', but the former wouldn't fly in multicultural Britain and the latter wouldn't meet American political objectives.

Pity Ukraine.

LEAVE A COMMENT

OUR CULTURAL PROBLEM

How may spies does it take to spy on a spy?

I'm going to share a post today that expands on Poul Henning Kamp's observation: NSA surveillance is a political problem, not a technological one.

Quinn Norton wrote an essay titled *Everything is Broken* for *Medium.com* on May 20th. In it she describes her experiences working with the 'intelligence community'. She explains why intelligence professionals genuinely do not understand why the public is disgusted with their dragnet spying operations. In a nutshell, Ms. Norton believes that spooks are *so* monitored themselves (by their employers), they think listening to the public's phone calls is pretty small fry: "So quit whining already!"

Spooks' attitude to their dragnet spying capabilities matters to everyone, because until we address the political problems which allow this spying to continue, spooks will continue to use and abuse said capabilities.

Disclaimer: I distrust people who say, "I used to be a spook, but now I'm not, and I'm going tell you what it's really like." Quinn Norton falls into this category. Ms. Norton now has a comfortable job writing for *Medium*, *Wired* and makes regular television appearances. (She was *Wired's* contact with Anonymous, the sabotaged hacker group, for two years.) On her Twitter profile page, she says she is a "Member of the Lamestream Media". Not a great way to keep your job in a contracting

industry, but Ms. Norton *isn't worried* about being fired.

Quinn Norton, as pilfered from Medium.com

From my very limited experience, working in intelligence is like joining the Mafia: you're never out. Mainstream Media professionals are trusted members of the American establishment. So no matter how many head scarves Ms. Norton wears, she's still 'safe' as far as the powers that be are concerned. In fact, given that she wrote what follows, I'd guess she's very, very trusted.

But that doesn't mean what she says is wrong; it means we should weigh her words in light of possible biases. My personal belief is what she says here is on target, though her delivery verges on nurturing the sense of powerlessness she says she wants to fight. I will only reproduce her argument concerning the intelligence community, but the whole essay is worth reading.

> *Then there's the Intelligence Community, who call themselves the IC. We might like it if they stopped spying on everyone all the time, while they would like us to stop whining about it.*
>
> *After spending some time with them, I am pretty sure I understand why they don't care about the complaining. The IC are some of the most surveilled humans in history. They know everything they do is gone over with a fine-toothed comb — by their peers, their bosses, their lawyers, other agencies, the president, and sometimes Congress. They live watched, and they don't complain about it.*
>
> *In all the calls for increased oversight, the basics of human nature gets neglected. You're not going to teach the spooks this is wrong by doing it to them more.*
>
> *There will always be loopholes and as long as loopholes exist or can be constructed or construed, surveillance will be as prevalent as it possibly can be. Humans are mostly egocentric creatures. Spooks, being humans, are never going to know why living without privacy is bad as long as they are doing it.*
>
> *Yet that's the lesser problem. The cultural catastrophe is what they're doing to make their job of spying on everyone easier. The most disturbing parts of the revelations are the 0day market, exploit hoarding, and weakening of standards. The question is who gets to be part of the "we" that are being kept allegedly safe by all this exploiting and listening and decrypting and profiling. When they attacked Natanz with Stuxnet and left all the other nuclear facilities vulnerable, we were quietly put on notice that the "we" in question began and ended with the IC itself. That's the greatest danger.*
>
> *When the IC or the DOD or the Executive branch are the only true Americans, and the rest of us are subordinate Americans, or worse the non-people that aren't associated with America, then we can only become lesser people as time goes on.*
>
> *As our desires conflict with the IC, we become less and less worthy of rights and considerations in the eyes of the IC. When the NSA hoards exploits and interferes with cryptographic protection for our infrastructure, it means using exploits against people who aren't part of the NSA just doesn't count as much. Securing us comes after securing themselves.*
>
> *In theory, the reason we're so nice to soldiers, that we have customs around honoring and thanking them, is that they're supposed to be sacrificing themselves for the good of the people. In the case of the NSA, this has been reversed. Our wellbeing is sacrificed to make their job of monitoring the world easier. When this is part of the culture of power, it is well on its way to being capable of any abuse.*
>
> *But the biggest of all the cultural problems still lies with the one group I haven't taken to task yet — the normal people living their lives under all this insanity.*
>
> *The problem with the normals and tech is the same as the problem with the normals and politics, or society in general. People believe they are powerless and alone, but the only thing that keeps people powerless and alone is that same belief. People, working together, are immensely and terrifyingly powerful.*
>
> *There is certainly a limit to what an organized movement of people who share a mutual dream can do, but we haven't found it yet.*
>
> *Facebook and Google seem very powerful, but they live about a week from total ruin all the time. They know the cost of leaving social networks individually is high, but en masse,*

> *becomes next to nothing. Windows could be replaced with something better written. The US government would fall to a general revolt in a matter of days. It wouldn't take a total defection or a general revolt to change everything, because corporations and governments would rather bend to demands than die. These entities do everything they can get away with—but we've forgotten that we're the ones that are letting them get away with things.*
>
> *Computers don't serve the needs of both privacy and coordination not because it's somehow mathematically impossible. There are plenty of schemes that could federate or safely encrypt our data, plenty of ways we could regain privacy and make our computers work better by default. It isn't happening now because we haven't demanded that it should, not because no one is clever enough to make that happen.*
>
> *So yes, the geeks and the executives and the agents and the military have fucked the world. But in the end, it's the job of the people, working together, to unfuck it.*

What Ms. Norton won't say, is that every time she gets a check from *Wired*, *The Atlantic*, etc, she's reaffirming the system we're all supposed to be fighting. Let's start the 'unfucking' by cutting ties with the Mainstream Media, Ms. Norton. You've got enough name recognition to buy a trailer and strike out on your own…

(BTW, I studiously avoid using lingo like 'IC' for 'intelligence community' because that's what they call themselves, *wink wink nudge nudge*. I encourage all writers whose primary goal is to communicate clearly to do the same.)

6 COMMENTS

BERGDAHL'S SAGA

US President Barack Obama (C), with the parents of US Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, Jani Bergdahl (L) and Bob Bergdahl

The Bowe Bergdahl story seems off. I do not know why the Obama administration was so keen to get Bergdahl back, however I suspect Sgt. Bergdahl has something to do with the administration playing both sides of the conflict in the Afghan war.

As we all know, the CIA trained and **armed** the Afgahn 'mujaheddin' (now called the Taliban) when they were fighting the USSR back in the '80s. That undertaking was called 'Operation Cyclone' and its budget was one of the largest ever given to the CIA. *Ah, the good old days.*

Now the Americans are fighting the Taliban. I suspect our reasons to be in Afghanistan are very similar to the reasons the Russians had: drug and arms sales. The US and Russian leadership have similar motivation– they're just two different teams playing the same game– so what attracted the Ruskies to this backward, Central Asian state is probably what attracted the Yankees too.

Everybody knows about the Afghani heroin potential (a couple billion USD every year), but perhaps the most attractive thing about Afghanistan is that conflicts there can go on a looong time. They're intractable. If you're an arms dealer, that's the holy grail of conflicts: as attractive as the perfectly counter-cyclical investment to a financial engineer, or a rich patient with gout to a doctor. Take, for example, the recent US arms sale to Qatar, which netted **US$ 7 billion**. *Just to Qatar!*

In this post, I aim to do three things. 1) Tell you what I know about the Soviet war in Afghanistan; 2) give a helpful timeline of Bergdahl's Saga; 3) convince you not to trust *Rolling Stone* magazine. On with the show!

Russia in Afghanistan

My understanding of what happened to the Russians comes from a friend's father, who lived in one of the CIS states during the last years of the USSR.

My friend's father was in a Soviet hospital recovering from an operation. A Russian veteran of the Afghan Invasion was in the bed next to him; they started talking about the war. The vet gave him two insights to the Russo-Afghan conflict:

1) "Afghanistan is like an old cow-pie, as long as nobody breaks the crust, there's no stink."

2) "Russian businessmen– Soviet government factories– were

selling arms to the Afghan Taliban (*the ones the CIA were training–anolen.com*) and ***supplying*** the Russian military. You can imagine what it does to morale when Russian soldiers are ordered to drive the same route every day, under-armed, so that Russian-made weapons could be fired at them to ensure the next round of munitions orders from the Afghanis. Afghanis paid cash." (American Cyclone cash? anolen.com wonders…)

Afghanistan is as much a cow-pie for Obama as it was for Brezhnev; and it's clear that Obama's war is just as intractable. Obama-buddies may be selling weapons to the enemy in Afghanistan just like Brezhnev did. In fact, given what happened at Benghazi where the CIA was running guns to Al-Qaeda, I think it's quite likely that US-supplied arms are sold to the Taliban through countries like Qatar.

What is different for Obama is that instead of supporting secular regimes in Asia and North Africa like the Soviets, he's propping up fundamentalist Islamic ones. Having lived in the Middle East, it's both tragic and comic to watch my government attack every secular regime in the region, and build up the most aggressive, backward states.

I believe that Obama's 'big picture' is about Washington's relation to the leaders of the fundamentalist Muslim world. This is not an antagonistic relationship. In may ways, weird conflicts between the US and fundamentalist Muslim societies help potentates like the Saudi Royal Family and other Muslim fundamentalist governments: the Great Satan distracts from problems at home like unemployment, social divisions, corruption. Nutball Muslim terrorists have been the most profitable thing for American elites since the Evil Empire.

The Bergdahls of Idaho: *Would you know more?*

Here's a short timeline of events from the start of Bowe's Military Odyssey.

1) In 2008 Bowe Bergdahl enlists, as a new army recruit he sucks up to authority figures but is withdrawn amongst other recruits. Bergdahl's unit nick-names him "SF" for 'Special Forces' and "Mr. Intensity". Despite Bergdahl's intensity, his unit earns a reputation for never doing anything right.

2) Once Bergdahl's unit is diployed in Afghanistan (2009), a British documentary team is allowed to follow his unit, the renowned 'F-ck Up' unit, to make a film about the Afghan War. (Shades of Laura Poitras?) *US Army: why risk public ridicule by allowing the Brits to follow a delinquent team? What are the odds that this unit just happens to contain 'The Last US POW'?*

3) Bergdahl emails friends and family expressing intense disgust with American foreign policy, the Army and the USA itself. Pa Bergdahl tells him to follow his conscience. Bowe suddenly disappears. Lots of military resources are wasted trying to find him (men die); diverted resources leave at least one other US outpost vulnerable when they're attacked. (Somebody important really wants to get Bowe back.)

4) Bergdahl is captured by a one-time CIA asset, the Haqqani network. (Hopefully, D.C. still has their phone number!) Intercepted enemy cables say: "LOL THEY[Americans] KNOW WHERE HE IS BUT THEY KEEP GOING TO WRONG AREA." and "I THINK HE IS BIG SHOT THAT WHY THEY ARE LOOKING FOR HIM." Maybe the Haqqanis were onto something wrt Bergdahl?

5) When the National Guard came to tell the Bergdahls of their son's situation, they only wanted to talk to Pa Bergdahl.

> *"The Army, they [the Bergdahls] felt, was subtly pressuring them not to speak to the press, and they were required to sign a nondisclosure agreement with the National Security Agency in order to view classified and top-secret material."*

> *"In what appears to be an unprecedented move, the Pentagon also scrambled to shut down any public discussion of Bowe. Members of Bowe's brigade were required to sign nondisclosure agreements as part of their paperwork to leave Afghanistan."*

6) In June 2012, Bowe Bergdahl was given a dedicated write-up in *Rolling Stone* by Michael Hastings, the same journalist whose car crashed under mysterious circumstances almost exactly one year later. The write-up is very pro-Obama, and dismisses talk of Bergdahl's desertion as "hatred". Hasting suggests that people critical of the President's Gitmo prisoner swap just want the war to go on longer. *Project much?*

7) Early 2014: Bergdahl's swap was mediated by the Qataris, a tiny gulf country which just bought US$ 7 billion worth of US weaponry. Qatar recently made headlines for channeling weapons to rebels in Syria 'against US wishes'.

> *"Qatar's covert efforts to back the Syrian rebels began at the same time that it was increasing its support for opposition fighters in Libya trying to overthrow the government of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi."*

8) May 2014: Upon Bergdahl's release, a win-win for the Taliban, Ma and Pa Bergdahl joined Obama for a press conference. They showed great big smiles for the camera and Pa treated us to some Pashto. Five nasty dudes had been traded to a one-time CIA front in order to secure Bowe's release. (What does a one-time CIA front want with a drug king-pin, by the way?) Right after his cuddly photo-op with the King of Gitmo, Barack Obama, Pa Bergdahl tweeted calling for an end to Gitmo. It appears that Pa Bergdahl was also caught tweeting (warmly) about his "Close Gitmo" mission to a Jihadist front, @ABalkhi.

9) Bowe can't talk to the press because he forgot all his English.

I would call Pa Bergdahl's behavior 'Stockholm Syndrome', but I don't think it is. I would call Bowe's amnesia tragic, but I think it's just useful.

I think, anolen.com readers, that Bowe Bergdahl and his dad are part of something bigger than 'the last American POW'. Bowe's got all the buttons: "home-schooled" (yikes!), male ballerina (yikes!), critical of 'The American Way of Life' (yikes!), wacko fundamentalist religious background (yikes!). Those are qualities I'm used to hearing attached to 'lone wolves' and mass shooters– well, not the male ballerina one. That's something I associate with Rahm Emanuel, who is even more scary.

Time will tell if my hunch about the Mr. Bergdahls is correct. In the meantime, concluding thoughts on Mr. Hastings and *Rolling Stone*.

This Stone Gathers Green

Rolling Stone, the magazine, has made a name for itself as 'anti-establishment' by reporting on things that are supposed to be embarrassing to 'the Man'. Here they are blowing their own horn: *Rolling Stones' Biggest Scoops, Exposés and Controversies*. Follow that link, and you'll find out how Carl Bernstein exposed *other* journalists' CIA connections and how Israel built nuclear bombs. There are 21 scoops in all.

One of those scoops is how *RS* and Michael Hastings ended the career of Gen. Stanley McChrystal. The Army accused *RS* of breaking "journalistic ground rules established for the magazine's profile of the general". *RS* had to make a quick statement on how such rules don't exist, in light of Carl Bernstein's famous exposé of CIA journos: "That's absurd!"

If you read Michael Hastings' article on Bergdahl, it's pretty clear that he had somebody's help writing it, somebody with a military 'in' who could tell him where to look for accurate-to-the-minute details on Bergdahl's disappearance and interceptions from enemy communications. Even if Hastings knew where to look for these details himself, getting cooperation on his FOIA requests would be next to impossible (and certainly not timely!)

What I find even more odd, is that anybody connected to the Army was willing to talk to Hastings after the displeasure Army brass showed following *RS*'s take down of McChrystal. Who has access to Army intelligence but doesn't have loyalty to the Army itself? Commander-in-Chief, maybe? General Betray-Us?

Fact is, if *Rolling Stone* wasn't a government asset for leaking bad news the safe way, men like Hastings wouldn't have careers.

If you're willing to concede that *Rolling Stone* is managed opposition to the government, it's interesting to note what other 'scoops' it feels proud of: John Elton being gay; Charles Manson Speaks Out; Patty Hearst Kidnapping Details; Nashville's power in the Music industry; antics of The Beatles… what's the intel angle on those, pray tell? Zunzuneo-style fluff pieces or MKUltra-style social conditioning?

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NOT MANY LAYERS TO THAT ONION

The thing about third generation companies is that 'the grandkids' usually haven't had to work as hard as grandpa did. They've had a whole heap of goodies fall into their lap, thanks to granddad's efforts. All the young'uns have to do is tread water, *but they've still got to tread water*.

I've written about Sweden and TOR lately, which is how I came across this website: www.torservers.net. That link will throw a mess of 'untrusted certificate' warnings at you, heads up.

Torservers.net is a German organization that runs Tor exit nodes. This is how they explain their services:

> *Tor is based on the concept of Onion Routing. Onion routing relays the traffic in an encrypted fashion through a number of other machines that voluntarily participate in the network. People using it rely on these volunteers to share their own bandwidth with them.*
>
> *With Tor, you can decide if you want to be a client only (which is the default configuration), a middle node helping to transport encrypted traffic for other users, or an exit node, allowing from and to the regular Internet. Exit nodes can decide which ports they want to allow traffic on, for example port 80 for access to regular HTTP sites, and port 443 for encrypted HTTPS websites.*
>
> *To Internet sites, traffic seems to originate from the exit node's IP address. If a user misuses the service, ie. by posting spam or otherwise illegal content, the owner of this IP address – usually the ISP – might be contacted to deal with this "abuse". The most efficient way for most ISPs to deal with it is to terminate contracts that attract abuse, and you might have a hard time explaining that you were not*

> *responsible for the abusive behavior. That's why, while you are highly encouraged to run a middle node or bridge on your residential line (no regular Internet traffic by others will leave your machine), you should know what you're doing when running an exit yourself, and you should not do so from your home connection.*

Torservers.net is designed to deal with a problem similar to the one Shava Nerad describes in this now offline Sydney Morning Herald article*:

> *Tor was developed by the US Navy to allow personnel to conceal their locations from websites and online services they would access while overseas. By downloading the simple software, personnel could hide the internet protocol address of their computers – the tell-tale number that allows website operators or intelligence services to determine a user's location.*
>
> ***Eventually the navy realised it must take Tor beyond the armed forces. "The problem is, if you make Tor a tool that's only used by the military . . . by using Tor you're advertising that you're military," Nerad says.***

(Who is Nerad? According to her LinkedIn: "I was the founding executive director of the Tor Project — infrastructural to the Arab Spring.")

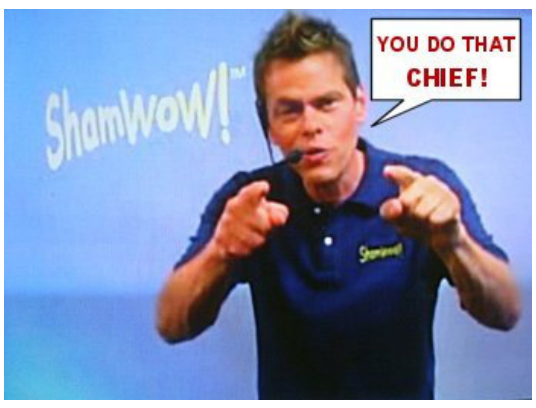
Torservers.net tries to solve this problem: you can't hide an intelligence asset *well* behind little-people 'volunteers', because those little-people don't have the resources necessary to deal with the day-to-day muck of running an 'illegal' espionage tool. Therefore, the only exit nodes that stay running are advertizing that they're spook.

Torservers.net, and it's partners, try to overcome the 'lawyer gap' between spooks and little-people-volunteers by creating a non-profit organization that is funded by legions of little guys just like you… and a handful of major philanthropic organizations like The Ford Foundation, the New America Foundation and the Chaos Computer Club moneybags, Wau Holland Stiftung.

In Torservers.net's own words, they'll do the heavy lifting of being a little-guy patsy for you:

> *We are working together with selected high speed hosting partners who understand that we are running Tor exit nodes. Our goal is to run exit nodes with a generous policy to help the Tor network to cope with the growing interest – and growing traffic demands.*

- *We **run managed and unmanaged nodes** in all shapes and sizes. If you are technically skilled, you can configure and run your own node. If you are not, you can still help the network and we will manage everything for you.*
- *We **deal with abuse**. You don't have to worry that one day your ISP contract might suddenly be terminated because someone used your IP to download some illegal files through your exit.*
- *We provide **private and stable bridge IPs** to organizations and individuals. In some countries, Tor is blocked and the only way to use it is through so-called bridges.*



"Are you technically under-powered, legally under-served and intellectually challenged? Don't worry! You can still help Tor!"

So, er, yeah: help the DoD maintain internet dominance!

Now, in order to *really* not look like the NSA, Tor needs to have diverse, international consensus. To prove this diverse, international consensus, here's a list of Torservers.net's international partners and their funders, where available:

USA

Access: "Founded in the wake of the 2009 Iranian post-election crackdown," but funded by reams of concerned citizens like you AND The Knight Foundation, Humanity United, IDRC, Google, **Sida**, Oxfam Novib, Swedbank, Skype, Voqal, The Sigrid Rausing Trust and Facebook. And those are just for 2013! Any of these funders NSA complicit?

The Calyx Institute: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you AND **The Ford Foundation**, New America Foundation, OpenITP and **Wau Holland Stiftung**.

NoiseTor: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you AND the info is no longer updated…

Germany

Torrorists e.V.: seems defunct.

Torservers.net: funded by a "German umbrella organization" according to their site, but Torservers.net says you can also send money

to the US org **NoiseTor** and it'll get to the right people.

Zwiebelfreunde e.V.: funding by reams of concerned citizens like you and with support from **Access**, the **Wau Holland Foundation**, the Digital Defenders partnership and nameless Internet service providers.

(Wau Holland Stiftung fund Wikileaks, and although they are very open about donation figures, they don't say who the money comes from– other than reams of concerned citizens like yourself.)

Canada

Koumbit: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you; but President Christopher Gervais works closely with Moshe Weitzman's Drupal, WhiteHouse.gov's choice for internet content management.

France

Nos Oignons: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you, but managed by guys like Jérémie Zimmerman, who write books with Jacob Appelbaum.

Sweden

DFRI: Föreningen för Digitala Fri- och Rättigheter: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you, but they share a board member, Linus Nordberg, with the Tor Project and *it seems* they share one with **.SE** too, Patrik Wallström. (.SE is Sweden's internet domain gatekeeper, and *civilian* supporter of the Stockholm Internet Forum. anolen.com believes .SE works with Swedish intelligence– yeah, I know, I'm out there!)

Iceland

IceTor: funded by an anonymous donator who likes Tor. These guys aren't even trying– but their site's set up like Torservers.net.

Switzerland

Swiss Privacy Foundation: funded by reams of concerned citizens like you– but check the collective legalese before you join!

Luxembourg

Frënn vun der Ënn: nobody seems to have given them any money. However, their site's set up like Torservers.net.

The Netherlands

Hart Voor Internetvrijheid: These guys seem very concerned about Gaddafi and the like. Fortunately, they're funded by reams of concerned citizens and *not* the USG.

And finally… **Lebanon**

Cyber Arabs (affiliated with the Institute for War & Peace Reporting): the IWFR is a US/UK/Netherlands charity, funded by US, UK and European governments, the **Ford Foundation**, **Sida**… catch a full list here. (Nice name, guys. Really classy.)

I've highlighted in **orange** the organizations that just keep popping up in the Tor legend… The Ford Foundation was outed for being a CIA front decades ago. The Swedish government orgs like Sida and *NOT* .SE are staples to the show (which is why their recent snub to Appelbaum is so hilarious.)

What I hope I'm getting across is that these 'exit node service providers' are cheap fronts to the larger Tor project. This matters, because it shows who really has interest in running Tor: the US, Swedish governments! They're the only ones who benefit from digging through the legal muck Tor dredges up; they're the ones ponying up for Torservers.net & Company!

Note how a lot of the heavy lifting is coming out of Germany; like Jacob Appelbaum is coming out of Germany. (*Incidentally*, Mt.Gox, the defunct Bitcoin exchange which exploded spectacularly in a burst of criminality and Bitcoin-dishonor, had its servers in Germany too. A coincidence, I'm sure.) It's weird for freedom-loving non-profits to base servers in Germany, because the Germans have really strict laws about what you can say on the internet. Why support regimes that are oppressive to free speech? *Well, because Germany is a US client state.* I think you see where I'm going.

Now we get to my point about third-generation companies. If you're trying to hide the source of money, you need to layer it. That means moving money around to a bunch of different organizations so it's unclear where the money really comes from. To layer, you need to make a lot of phone calls, set up front companies, websites, bank accounts, twitter accounts… Uhg! I'm getting tired just typing it. Not fun at all. Totally boring. Can we get an intern to do it?

The people running Tor are so gddmn lazy that I could sniff out where their money comes from on a Sunday morning. I *think* Iran, China, Syria, etc. can do the same. So who are we really spying on, boys?

US intelligence is a third-generation company. That's why Sweden's making a hostile takeover bid on their Tor subsidiary. Spoiled Onions, .SE's project showing how vulnerable the Americans have made Tor, is part of the attack. Spoiled Onions folks read anolen.com, btw.

*When I first referenced this Sydney Morning Herald article from November 13, 2007, titled "The Hack of the Year", it was freely available. That was one month ago. In the post, I promised to keep a copy of the article if it ever went offline. Didn't take em long, did it? I stand by my promise. The text has it's own anolen.com page here. You don't have to email me.

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